

IN THE APPLICATION

of

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for a

TOOTHBRUSH ASSEMBLY

filed with

THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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0877032-123096

TOOTHBRUSH ASSEMBLY

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application 60/009,323, filed 12/28/95.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The instant invention relates generally to toothbrushes and more specifically it relates to a toothbrush assembly.

The toothbrush assembly contains a holder shaped as a body of an animate object, a stand shaped as feet to keep the holder upright and a cover shaped as a head which slips over a bristle head of a toothbrush when not in use, so that the bristle head will remain sanitary and hygienic.

Description of the Prior Art

Numerous toothbrushes have been provided in prior art. For example, U.S. patents numbered 5,139,142 to Simon; 5,269,420 to Harrison et al.; 5,353,464 to Atkins et al. and 5,444,889 to Barre all are illustrative of such prior art. While these units may be suitable for the particular purpose to which they address, they would not be as suitable for the purposes of the present invention as heretofore described.

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SIMON, ERIC M.

DISPOSABLE TOOTHBRUSH COVER

U.S. Patent Number 5,139,142

A protective cover for the bristle portion of a toothbrush is adapted for disposability and reduced bulkiness. The cover is composed of two pieces of flexible, waterproof material which have been bonded along the top edge and lateral edges to form a pouch-like container. The remaining lateral edges are supplied with rib-and-groove closure profiles to provide for ease of insertion and resealability. The bottom edges are unbonded to allow the toothbrush handle to project externally. Alternately, an adhesive strip closure may be used in place of rib-and-groove closure profiles. The toothbrush cover may be produced rapidly and inexpensively to allow for disposal after a usage period of up to ten days, thereby reducing the probability of microbial colonization.

HARRISON, SUSAN
RODRIGUEZ, EDUARDO J.

TOOTHBRUSH AND HOLDER ASSEMBLY

U.S. Patent Number 5,269,420

A holder and utensil assembly for use by small children comprises a utensil having an elongated handle with a free end and an operative end. The utensil can be a toothbrush having a brush head at the operative end. The free end of the handle includes an enlarged shaped that defines a sporting implement. The holder defines the shape of a human sporting figure and includes arms that extend outwardly and are sized and arranged to cradle the sporting implement shape. When the holder is mounted on a flat surface, such as a wall, the utensil can be attached to and removed from the arms typically through a narrow space provided between the hands of the arms.

ATKINS, MARIE B.

ATKINS, RICHARD

TOOTHBRUSH CONSTRUCTION

U.S. Patent Number 5,353,464

The handle of the toothbrush is in the general form of an animal (e.g., a quadruped) having its body-supported when not in use in a generally horizontal position. The handle is manually encircled and grasped by the hand with the thumb extending under and around the lower part of the body and with the palm and fingers extending over and around the upper part of the body portion as in a fist. The brush head of the toothbrush extends from an end of the handle. When the brush is not in use, it is adapted to rest on a flat surface with the bristles spaced from such surface. The device is adapted to motivate children to acquire and maintain desirable lifelong habits of good dental hygiene, it is easy for children to use, and it has enhanced sanitary

features not found in the common types of toothbrushes presently available in the marketplace. To enhance the utility of the construction, at least an exterior portion of that part of the body portion which is manually encircled and grasped by the user's hand as in a fist, is fabricated from a cellular material, preferably a closed cell cellular polymer which, most preferably, has a relatively smooth outer finish and is manually compressible but resilient. A preferred cellular polymer is a closed cell foamed or cellular ethylene-vinyl acetate copolymer.

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BARRE, BERTRAND

TOOTHBRUSH ASSEMBLY

U.S. Patent Number 5,444,889

A toothbrush assembly including a toothbrush having a head portion with bristles attached thereto, and a handle portion, on a free-standing stand for the brush. The stand is capable of retaining the brush in a substantially upright position.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A first object of the present invention is to provide a toothbrush assembly that will overcome the shortcomings of the prior art devices.

A second object is to provide a toothbrush assembly for a conventional toothbrush that consists of a holder shaped as a body of an animate object, a stand shaped as feet to keep the holder upright and a cover shaped as a head which fits over the bristle head of the conventional toothbrush when not in use, so that the bristle head will remain sanitary and hygienic.

A third object is to provide a toothbrush assembly in which the holder shaped as the body of the animate object is the handle of a toothbrush, the stand shaped as the feet

can be formed as part of the holder or the stand can be detachable from the holder and the feet can be permanently mounted on a base to comprise the stand.

A fourth object is to provide a toothbrush assembly, in which the cover being sanitary and hygienic will keep airborne bacteria and dust from settling upon the bristle head of the toothbrush.

A fifth object is to provide a toothbrush assembly, in which the cover will prevent a person from touching the bristle head with the fingers to transfer ever present bacteria thereto.

A sixth object is to provide a toothbrush assembly, in which the cover in place will indicate that the bristle head is kept clean and is not to be touched.

A seventh object is to provide a toothbrush assembly, which conceals a toothbrush completely as an animate object.

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An eighth object is to provide a toothbrush assembly that will improve motivational aspects, to encourage a child to easily assemble all of the parts of the toothbrush assembly together when not in use, so as to promote a superior way to achieve desirable habits associated with good oral hygiene.

A ninth object is to provide a toothbrush assembly that will enforce a child who likes cartoon characters to utilize the hygienic values incorporated into the invention, instead of the stark and unattractive existing toothbrush systems.

A tenth object is to provide a toothbrush assembly, in which the holder shaped as a body of an animate object contains adjustable arms and legs to achieve many different positions, whereby the toothbrush therein is not limited for removal in just an upright position, but in many different angled positions that can be ideal for people with limited dexterity.

An eleventh object is to provide a toothbrush assembly that is simple and easy to use.

A twelfth object is to provide a toothbrush assembly that is economical in cost to manufacture.

Further objects of the invention will appear as the description proceeds.

To the accomplishment of the above and related objects, this invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings, attention being called to the fact, however, that the drawings are illustrative only, and that changes may be made in the specific construction illustrated and described within the scope of the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

Various other objects, features and attendant advantages of the present invention will become more fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein;

FIGURE 1 is a front perspective view of a first embodiment of the instant invention, in which the animate object is a standing super hero doll and the cover being a hollow head thereof is removable from the bristle head of a conventional toothbrush in the holder being a body thereof.

FIGURE 1a is a side perspective view taken in the direction of arrow 1a in Figure 1, showing the cover hinged opened on the top of the holder.

FIGURE 1b is an enlarged perspective view of the area in Figure 1a as indicated by arrow 1b, showing the conventional toothbrush in phantom and the hinge in greater detail.

FIGURE 1c is a side view taken in the direction of arrow 1c in Figure in Figure 1b, with parts broken away showing the cover hinged closed.

FIGURE 1d is a front perspective view of the first embodiment, in which the animate object is a sitting bear cub doll with the cover being a hollow head hinged closed.

FIGURE 1e is a front perspective view similar to Figure 1d, with the cover hinged open and the conventional toothbrush removed from the holder.

FIGURE 1f is a front perspective view with parts broken away and in section of the first embodiment, in which the animate object is a sitting dog doll with the cover being a head hinged closed.

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FIGURE 1g is a front perspective view with parts broken away and in section of the first embodiment, in which the animate object is a standing humanlike doll, with the cover being a head hinged closed and the arms and legs shown adjustable.

FIGURE 2 is a front exploded perspective view of a second embodiment of the instant invention, in which the animate object is a standing female human doll.

FIGURE 3 is a front perspective view of the second embodiment in Figure 2 assembled together.

FIGURE 4 is a front exploded perspective view of the second embodiment, in which the animate object is a standing rabbit doll.

FIGURE 5 is a front perspective view of the second embodiment in Figure 4 assembled together.

FIGURE 6 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 5, showing a larger base of the stand.

FIGURE 7 is a front perspective view of the second embodiment, in which the animate object is a standing mouse doll.

FIGURE 8 is a front exploded perspective view of the second embodiment, in which the animate object is a standing basketball player doll.

FIGURE 9 is a front perspective view of the second embodiment in Figure 8 assembled together.

FIGURE 10 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 9, showing a larger base of the stand.

FIGURE 11 is a front exploded perspective view of the second embodiment in Figure 7.

FIGURE 12 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 7, showing a larger base of the stand.

FIGURE 13 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 5, with the base removed therefrom so that the stand is just the feet.

FIGURE 14 is a front perspective view of the area in Figure 13 indicated by arrow 14 with the cover broken away.

FIGURE 15 is a front perspective view showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing rabbit doll, as in Figure 13.

FIGURE 16 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 15, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing rabbit doll in a first modification.

FIGURE 17 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 16, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing rabbit doll in a second modification.

FIGURE 18 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 17 broken away, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing rabbit doll in a third modification, and the stand being just the feet detachable from a free end of the handle.

FIGURE 19 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 18 broken away, showing the stand being just the feet formed onto the free end of the handle in the third modification.

FIGURE 20 is a front exploded perspective view of the second embodiment, in which the animate object is a standing cat doll.

FIGURE 21 is a front perspective view of the second embodiment in Figure 20 assembled together.

FIGURE 22 is a front perspective view of the second embodiment, in which the animate object is a standing duck doll.

FIGURE 23 is a front exploded perspective view of the second embodiment, in which the animate object is a standing super hero doll.

FIGURE 24 is a front perspective view, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing cat doll as in Figure 20.

FIGURE 25 is a front perspective view, the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing rabbit doll as in Figure 16.

FIGURE 26 is a front perspective view, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing duck doll as in Figure 22.

FIGURE 27 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 9, with the base removed therefrom so that the stand is just the feet.

FIGURE 28 is a front perspective view of the area in Figure 27 indicated by arrow 28, with the cover broken away.

FIGURE 29 is a front perspective view, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing basketball player doll as in Figure 27.

FIGURE 30 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 29, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing basketball player doll in a first modification.

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FIGURE 31 is a front perspective view similar to Figure 30, showing the toothbrush having the handle as the holder shaped for the body of the standing basketball player doll in a second modification and the stand being just the feet detachable from a free end of the handle.

FIGURE 32 is a front perspective similar to Figure 31 broken away, showing the stand being just the feet formed onto the free end of the handle in the second modification.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Turning now descriptively to the drawings, in which similar reference characters denote similar elements throughout the several views, Figures 1 to 1g illustrate toothbrush assembly 34 comprising a toothbrush 36 having a handle 38 with a bristle head 40 thereon. A holder 42 receives the handle 38 of the toothbrush 36. A stand 44 retains the holder 42 in an upright position. A cover 46 fits over the bristle head 40 of the toothbrush 36 when not in use, so that the bristle head 40 will remain sanitary and hygienic.

The cover 46 will keep airborne bacteria and dust from settling upon the bristle head 40 of the toothbrush 36. It will prevent a person from touching the bristle head 40 with the fingers, to transfer ever present bacteria thereto. The cover 46 in place will indicate that the bristle head 40 is kept clean and is not to be touched.

The holder 42 is in the shape of a body 48 of an animate object 50. The stand 44 is in the shape of a pair of feet 52, to match with the body 48 of the animate object 50. The cover 46 is in the shape of a hollow head 54, to match with the body 48 of the animate object 50.

The cover 46 can be hinged at 56 to the top of the holder 42 and can include a latch mechanism 58, so as to keep the cover 46 in a closed upright position over the bristle head 40 of the toothbrush 36. The stand 44, as shown in Figures 1 and 1a, can include a base 60 for the pair of feet 52 to be mounted thereon.

The animate object 50, as shown in Figures 1 to 1c, is a standing super hero doll 62. The animate object 50 in Figures 1d and 1e, is a sitting bear cub doll 64. The animate object 50 in Figure 1f, is a sitting dog doll 66. The animate object 50 in Figure 1g, is a standing humanlike doll 68. The standing humanlike doll 68 has arms 69a and legs 69b that are adjustable, so as to achieve many different

positions. The toothbrush 36 is not limited for removal in just an upright position, but in any different angled positions that can be ideal for people with limited dexterity.

A modified toothbrush assembly 70 is shown in Figures 2 to 32, consisting of a holder 72 being a handle 74 of a toothbrush 76 with a bristle head 78 thereon. A stand 80 retains the holder 72 in an upright position. A cover 82 fits over the bristle head 78 of the toothbrush 76 of the holder 72, when not in use, so that the bristle head 78 will remain sanitary and hygienic.

The cover 82 will keep airborne bacteria and dust from settling upon the bristle head 78 of the toothbrush 76. It will prevent a person from touching the bristle head 78 with the fingers, to transfer ever present bacteria thereto. The cover 82 in place will indicate that the bristle head 78 is kept clean and is not to be touched.

The handle 74 of the toothbrush 76 of the holder 72 is in the shape of a body 84 of an animate object 86. The stand 80 is in the shape of a pair of feet 88, to match with the body 84 of the animate object 86. The cover 82 is in the shape of a hollow head 90, to match with the body 84 of the animate object 86. The stand 80, as shown in Figures 2 to 12 and 20 to 23, can include a base 92 for the pair of feet 88 to be mounted thereon.

The animate object 86, as shown in Figures 2 and 3, is a standing female human doll 94. The animate object 86, as shown in Figures 4 to 6, 13 to 19 and 25, is a standing rabbit doll 96. The animate object 86, as shown in Figures 7, 11 and 12, is a standing mouse doll 98. The animate object 86, as shown in Figures 8 to 10 and 27 to 32 is a standing basketball player doll 100. The animate object 86, as shown in Figures 20, 21 and 24, is a standing cat doll 102. The animate object 86 in Figures 22 and 25, is a standing duck doll 104. The animate object 86 in Figure 23, is a standing super hero doll 106.

The handle 74 of the toothbrush 76 of the holder 72 has a first end 71 and a second end 75. The first end 71 contains evenly expanded vertical and horizontal members 77, which take on the shape of arms 83, which make up part of the body 84 of the animate object 86. The second end 75 which contains evenly expanded vertical and horizontal members 79, take on the shape of legs 79a and ankles 79b of the body 84 of the animate object 86. The feet 88 have a slot or opening 81 to receive the second end 75, up to but not above the ankles 79b of the handle 74 of the toothbrush 76 of the holder 72. The stand 80 which contains the base 92, also has a slot or opening 81a as shown in Figure 3, to receive and give added support for the second end 75 of the handle 74 of the toothbrush 76 of the holder 72.

The stand 80 can be detachable and connected to a free end of the handle 74 of the toothbrush 76 of the holder 72, as shown in Figures 2 to 13, 18, 20 to 23, 27 and 31. The stand 80 can also be formed onto a free end of the handle 74 of the toothbrush 76 of the holder 72, as shown in Figures 19 and 32. The modified toothbrush assembly 70 in it's upright position, which is the animate object 86, can also be achieved in a horizontal position.

LIST OF REFERENCE NUMBERS

34 toothbrush assembly

36 toothbrush of 34

38 handle of 36

40 bristle head of 36

42 holder of 34

44 stand of 34

46 cover of 34

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48 body for 42 of 50

50 animate object

52 foot of 44

54 hollow head of 46

56 hinge between 46 and 42

58 latch mechanism between 46 and 42

60 base of 44

62 standing super hero doll for 50

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- 64 sitting bear cub doll for 50
- 66 sitting dog doll for 50
- 68 standing humanlike doll for 50
- 69a adjustable arm of 68
- 69b adjustable leg of 68
- 70 modified toothbrush assembly
- 71 first end of 74
- 72 holder of 70

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74 handle of 76

75 second end of 74

76 toothbrush for 72

77 evenly expanded vertical and horizontal
members on 71

78 bristle head of 76

79 evenly expanded vertical and horizontal
members on 75

79a leg of 84

79b ankle of 84

80 stand of 70

81 slot or opening in 88

81a slot or opening in 80

82 cover of 70

83 arm of 84

84 body for 74 of 76

86 animate object

88 foot of 80

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- 90 hollow head for 82
- 92 base of 80
- 94 standing female human doll for 86
- 96 standing rabbit doll for 86
- 98 standing mouse doll for 86
- 100 standing basketball player doll for 86
- 102 standing cat doll for 86
- 104 standing duck doll for 86
- 106 standing super hero doll for 86

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It will be understood that each of the elements described above, or two or more together may also find a useful application in other types of methods differing from the type described above.

While certain novel features of this invention have been shown and described are pointed out in the annexed claims, it is not intended to be limited to the details above, since it will be understood that various omissions, modifications, substitutions and changes in the forms and details of the device illustrated and in its operation can be made by those skilled in the art without departing in any way from the spirit of the present invention.

Without further analysis, the foregoing will so fully reveal the gist of the present invention that others can, by applying current knowledge, readily adapt it for various applications without omitting features that, from the standpoint of prior art, fairly constitute essential characteristics of the generic or specific aspects of this invention.